

THE
DIVINE LOGOS

H. T. Johnson

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THE DIVINE LOGOS;

OR,

WONDERFUL WORD OF JOHN.

BY

PROF. H. T. JOHNSON,

Late President of West Tennessee University.



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Dedicated

TO

HON. ORLANDO B. POTTER; RT. REVS. DANIEL A. PAYNE,
JOHN M. BROWN, HENRY M. TURNER, BENJAMIN
T. TANNER; PROFS. W. S. SCARBOROUGH,
T. McCAUTS STEWART, J. C. PRICE,
and others among the living;
BISHOPS WM. F. DICKERSON, RICHARD H. CAIN; PROF.
LORENZO WESTCOTT HOWARD; DR. E. R. BOWER
LINCOLN; DEAN J. T. LATIMER, S.T.D.,
Boston University, among
the departed;
AS A FAINT EXPRESSION OF GRATITUDE FOR THEIR DEVO-
TION TO THE CAUSE OF HUMANITY; THEIR SYMPA-
THY FOR AN UNFORTUNATE PEOPLE; THEIR EFFORTS
IN BEHALF OF A HIGHER STANDARD OF LEARNING,
PIETY, AND USEFULNESS. AMONG SUCH THE
WRITER WOULD MODESTLY SUBSCRIBE
THIS MINIATURE EXPOSITION OF
CHRISTOLOGIC TRUTH.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

MARKED and diversified are the revelations of the Godhead, both in degree and intensity, whether considered from prophetic, gospel, or epistolary points of view. While they all happily converge in the same celestial focus, and reflect the same rays of the divine nature and plans earthward, these rays are striking, splendrous, and sublime in proportion as seer, evangelist, and teacher are illuminated by the torch of inspiration or are elevated toward the heavenly Ideal. That ideal is Christ, the Divine Logos. In reference to finite visions of Him, it cannot be affirmed that "distance lends enchantment to the view," for He only appears as "the fairest among ten thousand and the altogether lovely" to those alone who, beholding Him from the Mount of Love, confidently relate the things they both see and hear. It must follow, therefore, that the best and highest

possible revelation of God is that given by the Son of God. And again, it must as certainly follow that the most complete and perfect revelations of Christ are those, the result of the most intimate intercourse and fellowship with Him.

While it is true that "the heavens declare the glory of God," equally true is it that "one star differeth from another in glory." The most casual observer who scans never so hurriedly the great volume of celestial nature, cannot but be strikingly impressed with the stupendous exhibition of variety amidst the harmony which he finds there. When the psalmist considered the heavens, the diversity of their revelation of combined wisdom and power, and the reflection of creature image in this looking-glass of nature, it so bewildered him that he stood speechless in the presence of a self-instituted investigation.

So, too, with the contemplator of the Word of God. In exploring the realms of sacred truth, in reflecting the glories of Deity, in revealing the wealth of Christologic nature and operations, in poring over the mysteries of the eternal world, his is a task from which, unaided, he would shrink in bewilderment.

Yet, though assisted by superhuman resources, and though elevated to the seventh heaven upon wings of inspiration, what still remains unseen or undiscoverable to his vision is more unspeakable than the things which, though experienced, cannot lawfully be mentioned.

Every writer of religious prophecy, of sacred narrative, of inspired poetry, proverbs, and allegories, of scriptural biographies or gospel records, are like so many planets in the infinite system of divine truth, all transmitting the glories of their central source through their peculiar and varied constitutions. They all vary in relative bulk, density, and distance, but are uniform in reflective character, since they all emit their borrowed lustres. Once more these human constellations vary in their intensity of glory or light properties, and for this reason, also, in their impressiveness upon far-off observers. In the great system of revelation, each one has his favorite light orb which he admires above the rest for the possession of some striking and pre-eminent excellence. Of these, none is more conspicuous or distinguished in this respect than Ezekiel and Isaiah in the Old,

and John and Paul in the New, Testament. The Argus-eyed prophet of the former, whose all-rotary vision enabled him to sweep the circle of divine mysteries, is somewhat analogous to the catholic-minded apostle of the latter dispensation. Yet for loftiness and definiteness of conceptions concerning the person and office of incarnate Deity, Isaiah and John present more of analogy than Paul or Ezekiel.

Should we, then, confine our estimate to the gospel era, and survey the entire array of towering figures therein displayed, we know of none who would stand higher or project outward in bolder relief than the Evangelist John. From the Mount of Love, this eagle-eyed seer of the New Testament views our Lord, and discloses such revelations of His attributes and glories as we seek to find elsewhere in vain. It is because of their catholicity and uniqueness, their profundity as well as loftiness, their ever-increasing expressions of Christologic wealth ; it is, withal, because of their transcendent meritoriousness, that we feel justified in venturing these revelations in the manner attempted.

While neither completeness nor originality

is claimed for this humble contribution to Christian thought, while the expectation of its hearty approval or general endorsement of views advanced is not among the offerer's slightly cherished feelings in this direction, it is nevertheless his hope, for which he confidently prays, that it may prove serviceable to some student of the Sacred Word, and that it may inspire a deeper interest in the Great Teacher, and tend to the glory of Him who is able to make wise unto salvation.

H. T. JOHNSON.

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INTRODUCTION.

THE Gospel of John is the greatest book ever written. Its subject is a unique Person. Its delineation of that Person is a unique delineation. Jesus Christ, like every human being, lived a dual life — outward, related to humanity in general: inward, spiritual, related to heavenly things, concerned with an inner circle of intimate friends. This latter sphere is the chief theme of the fourth Gospel. What sets it apart and above the other books is, that it clearly and purposely reveals not what Jesus did, but what He was — His person, claims, and character. What they accomplish indirectly, this book does directly. It paints its portrait from life: they collect their materials, and let their subject in His real self shine through or be reflected in their records of His objective activity. It is the same portrait; there is no discordance. The keenest of critical inquiries have failed

to discover any difference, in the essential elements, between the representation of Jesus according to the three first Gospels and that of the fourth. Still, if in so lofty a range of literature there are loftier heights, the Gospel of John rises far above the others in the majesty and mystery of its disclosures of the person of Christ.

There can be no reasonable doubt that the fourth Gospel is a trustworthy document. The sharp controversy of the last fifty years has left us in the position that here is a record which comes from the personal recollections of the man whose name it bears. What, then, may be said for its contents? The recollections of a disciple, — they are the recollections of *the* disciple, of one who was peculiarly near the heart and life of Jesus,— he seems to have been one who was more than ordinarily gifted, mentally and spiritually, and his gift of mind and soul more than ordinarily developed. He was fitted — if anyone was fitted, he above others, — to receive the fullest and finest impressions of his Master's character. On purely critical grounds alone there is reason for maintaining that the representation of Jesus Christ given in the

Gospel of John is the most trustworthy of all.

What is the reflection with which these marvellous recollections are concluded? It is this: "There are also many other things which Jesus did." Like all other attempts to picture the person and work of Jesus, this book confesses itself to be totally inadequate to compass the exceeding beauty and abundant activity of that Person concerning whose words of love and grace, deeds of power, intensity of suffering, and radiant glory, character, and personality — the unknown and unrecorded surpass all that the thought and insight of the "beloved disciple" have discovered and recalled. We do not now inquire into the reason of this, though such an inquiry would find itself partially answered in the vitality of the method and the spiritual intensity of Jesus Christ. The fact is one before which the student may well stand in astonishment, not unmixed with awe.

It is with profound satisfaction that believers in Christianity find the controversies of the present day centreing about these records of the person and work of its Founder. Is the gospel account trustworthy? Did Jesus

do and say what is here recorded? These are fundamental, vital questions, and these are the living questions presented to the people on every hand. The literary problems of these questions may never be grasped or solved by any others than specialists. But the portrait of Jesus which these controverted Gospels disclose, can be studied and enjoyed by peasant and philosopher alike. The portrait of that Person, in all the strength and beauty of His character, is the authentication of the books in which it stands. No negative criticism can succeed in permanently overthrowing the historical character of the Gospel, because no negative criticism can essentially weaken the unique character of their representation of Jesus Christ. Controversies along this line can have but one issue. If the Gospels are found wanting, the want will not be in historical accuracy, but in historical completeness. The monument that marks the overthrow of such assaults will bear the words already quoted, "There are also many other things which Jesus did."— "*Old and New Testament Student.*" By permission of DR. WM. R. HARPER, editor, and professor in Yale University.

CHAPTER I.

THE IDEAL LOGOS.

THE wealth and force of the term “logos” (*Λόγος*), is revealed so transcendently nowhere as in its application to the Son of God. As the word “book” (*Βιβλος*), when applied to the volume of revelation, the Holy Scriptures, is lifted from its commonplace import, so the term “logos,” only a word, an ordinary one in the original, in its specific and most expressive application is fraught with all the majesty of celestial speech. And as if borrowed from the heavenly glossary, and licensed for that peculiar service, it embraces the idea of the divine unfolding through the medium of revelation. In theological usage it signifies the mediation and incarnation of deity in the Son of God. The first thought

involves the idea of Christ as Author of the plan of salvation before the world, while the second includes the scheme of redemption as achieved in the flesh. Generically a word is but an expression ; then again, the sign or medium by which one person's mind is revealed to another. Without a communicative faculty, man would have little advantage over matter. Unless this communication be by means of articulate speech, he would be only on a level with the brutes that perish. From an otherwise solitary and degraded depth he has been elevated by the magic influence of articulate utterance into the divine dignity of creation's monarch, "a little lower than the angels."

Whenever and in what manner it pleased the Father to manifest Himself, the Son was chosen the medium of such manifestation. This is true of men and angels alike. We cannot wing our way sufficiently far into the hidden recesses of anterior time to find no movement of the divine thought in the Logos.

Nor can we conceive of any process of the divine operation disconnected with the agency or personage of the Eternal Logos.

Whether we emphasize the human or divine aspect of the Logos, dazed and obscure will be our conceptions, or vague and misleading our doctrinal trend, unless supreme consideration is given to the predominance of the mysterious and inscrutable.

Whether we contemplate Deity in the ineffable light of His sovereign and unrevealed character, or whether we study Jesus of Nazareth as God manifest in the flesh, ours is a problem as profound as the universe, and as baffling to finite intelligence as "the things the angels desire to look into."

Nevertheless, the fact of its inscrutability is no formidable barrier in the way of a reverent approach to a subject bearing so vital a relation to humanity. Is this Logos the "He" of whom Moses and the prophets did write? is "He" the Creator and Preserver of all things? is "He" the man Christ Jesus, who came from

the bosom of the Father ? is "He" the Friend of publicans and sinners ? are all questions which involve the peace, the well-being, the salvation of mankind. But there are also questions incidental and correlated to these, fraught with the greatest significance to the believer, as well as theologian. They do not float upon the surface of the vast sea of the God-thought or of divine revelation, but underlie the substratum of the religious feeling, and are interlinked to the mighty system of faith in which towers all clear and refreshing Christian thought.

Faith has sometimes been defined as pure reason, the highest exercise of judgment in the realm of truth. But even when it stands on tiptoe it is unable to peer into the mysteries of the unrevealed, or fathom the deep things of God. However, predications of the Unknown Being or state need not be relegated to the sphere of speculation or consigned to the ranks of agnosticism.

There is a natural tendency in all finite

judgment to sceptically estimate that which it cannot comprehend. But such folly should not be exercised in our efforts to grasp the contents of revelation or investigate the hidden things of the supersensuous. To contemplate the things above the reach of mortals is as elevating to the intellect as it is gratifying and refreshing to the spiritual nature of man. If we were inclined to accept only that which we absolutely know, scant indeed would be the store-house of our possessions, as respects temporal as well as spiritual matters. When knowledge totters, the helping hand of faith is extended. When sight is dimmed in the mighty distance of futurity, or is lost in the gaze of eternal problems, we must either take the wings of faith and mount aloft, or flutter in doubt and fear in reason's selfish dungeon. While man may be non-plussed when challenged by the query, "Who, by searching, can find out God?" yet it is wonderfully consoling to the inquiring, longing soul, to be informed that "the only be-

gotten Son hath declared him." Not alone the things necessary to "make wise unto salvation," are furnished us, but the things also which religiously edify and gratify.

All this we find in inestimable amplitude in Him whose self-revelation sets Him ever before the eyes of a needy humanity as the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

Who, then, is God, may be answered by the Son of God Himself, as yet also by those to whom He has given the most complete revelations or self-manifestations. It were forever a matter of impossibility for man to even faintly apprehend the gracious attributes of Deity, much less draw near to the awful brightness of His personality, had it not been for the more subdued rays of a glorious revelation, beheld in the face of the Divine Logos.

An incontestable evidence of the dignity, yea, divinity, of human nature is its deep aspiration after the supernatural. This truth ever finds a voluntary expression when man

is at peace with God and is a reflex of the divine mind.

But even when the divine image is lost, when the heart becomes "deceitful and desperately wicked above all things," when men are led captive by the devil at his will, there is an unconscious yielding to the divine impulse, a subjective struggle for mastery over the forces of fallen human nature and the acquisition of eternal truth and triumph. In his primitive state, were Adam asked for an expression of his ideal, he would triumphantly have pointed to the halo of heavenly environment which encircled him. His vision, as yet being undimmed by sin, would permit him to take in the infinite expression with spiritual transparency. He would gaze upward, though infinite light bedazed his sight. He could still gaze upward, even when he fell.

If we follow him as he gropes his way in darkness, we will find his head directed heavenward, though his feet lay hold on

the ways of hell. The avenue of intercourse between man and his Maker having been closed by transgressions, and the penalty of insulted justice having been expressed by diluvian retribution, the dismayed posterity of Adam again sought presumptuous intercourse with Heaven from the plains of Shinar. The material monument they attempted to rear was no less an expression of their conception of the Almighty and His operations, than was it analogous to the crude yet stubborn constructions of humanity unsanctified toward the Infallible Ideal.

The existence of these ideals may be discovered unconsciously breathing in every line of heathen poetry, ancient and modern; in their sculpture or paintings; in art, science, philosophy, and religion, wherever existing without the pales of the Christian system. The Heavenly Standard was unrevealed, but in the heart of humanity there was a consciousness of its existence somewhere and of its attainableness somehow.

The ideal of ethics was met and vigorously opposed by the Grecian sophists on the ground that they were mere conventions. To the gods, as the embodiment of these ideals, the religionist would point, and predicate as a reason for loyalty to the same, that "the gods made these distinctions." It was not left for the true light from heaven to show the fallacy of these ethical claims, but the answer is forthcoming and silencing from two young disciples of Socrates: "Granting that the gods are disposed to enforce some moral law, still, does that fact give any time distinction between good and evil as such? For whoever urges us to do right merely to get the favor of the gods, urges us in reality merely to do what is prudent." Such doctrines make justice not desirable in itself, but desirable for what it brings in its train. Thus there would be no difference between good and evil as such: only between what brings reward and what brings punishment. They finally appeal to Socrates for the best

exposition of the principles of ethics. The shortcomings of the moral ideal was amply seen in the answer given. The Platonic ideal of justice was alike unsatisfying to the earnest seeker after truth ; nor do the teachings of either Aristotle or the Stoics hit the mark of humanity's deeply craved ideal. The extension of the empire of reason to its utmost range, or its elevation to the mind's loftiest possibility, would alike leave the Logos ideal ungrasped. That the various philosophic movements furnished antecedents or afforded involuntary contributions to proper conceptions of the transcendent Ideal Logos is all that can be admitted. For it is not until we contemplate the moral code in the teachings of the Son of God and exemplified in His life, and these alone, that the deepest wants of the soul are met and the highest aspirations of the mind honored.

CHAPTER II.

THE IDEA DEVELOPED.

“THE testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy” Akin to this sublime utterance is the conclusive verdict of our Lord Himself : “Search the scriptures ; for in them ye think ye have eternal life : and they are they which testify of me.” The difference between the Word “truth” from Genesis to Malachi, and that from Matthew to Revelation, is the difference only between evolutionary prophecy and Christian doctrine. The Christ of Moses is not the Christ of Matthew only as the seed is not the flower or the blade is not the full corn in the ear. The author of the Pentateuch may be unlike the artists of the New Testament in their representations of Christ. The one beheld Him afar off, and as revealed through the perspective of faith alone, while

the others contemplated His personality with natural eyes in the flesh. The former waited long for Him, but died without the sight, while these were privileged to thrust their fingers in His wound prints, and acknowledge Him as "the Christ, the Son of God."

It is not strange, then, that the synoptic biographers should so far transcend the Old Dispensation writer in their delineations of the office and nature of the Son of Man ; and yet the contrast between them is greater in degree than in kind. Rather than presenting the wide dissimilarity of shadow and substance, the contrast suggests the harmony of part and whole. Granting that with the writings of Moses originated the Messianic idea, the question is not how he came by it, nor yet why did he not enlarge upon it, but rather, what was its scope and how did he apply it ? Whether it floated to him down the avenue of tradition, or was unfolded to him through the doors of his religious consciousness, matters

little, since upon it he would found the world's hope or predicate the faith of ages. The germinal thought of his most notable prophecy, or rather the prediction he was inspired to record, was first that the cause of universal sin should be eradicated, and also that its instrument of extirpation should be identical with that of its occasion. All other utterances of inspiration, if prophetic or regal, if patriarchal or sacerdotal, in complexion, must be with an eye single to, and in strict conformity with, this underlying, overtopping promise.

This "seed of the woman" primarily, then, referred to the human personality of Christ. It would never do to circumscribe the notion of the promise to either the divine or human Redeemer, as apprehended by Moses, else will be attached a sense never intended by the great writer. A union of the two natures, the humanity clothed with the divinity of Christ, is a construction theologically necessary and actually sustained. The seed was

to germinate a plant of heavenly origin, yet of earthly fruitage. It was to be planted by the Divine Hand upon terrestrial soil, while its leaves were to be for the healing of the nations. Though the most miniature seed in all the realm of vegetation, it embodied the properties and involved the latitude of the most adequate development. The most gigantic oak or most stately cedar of Lebanon was to be compared to this Logos evolution and expansion only as pigmies may be compared with giants or mole-hills bear semblance to mountains. Its insignificant nature was not to entitle it to contempt, because it would yet afford a resting-place for both beast and bird ; nor was its majesty or utility limited to the farm and forest. Its horticultural capacity is most strikingly manifest in its service to the sense of sight and the gratification of taste. Beauty and fragrance so abounded in the lily and rose that they were universally endorsed by ancient writers as symbolic of the excellencies of the rose of

Sharon and the heavenly lily. Scarcely can one observe the trend of Messianic psalms and prophecies, or follow the general current of scriptural evolution along the line of pre-Christian ages, without being struck with the beauty and fitness of the tropes applied to Christ in an evolutionary sense. According to prophetic gauge, as a tender plant He was to grow up. Not the stately aspect of the lordly cedar of Lebanon is referred to, not the vast proportions of some mighty tree, that has reached its maturity through instantaneous process, but the mustard seed. As the tender plant He should grow up.

To an adequate comprehension of the Logos thought there were two antecedents. The idea was capitalized and amplified by John, but its exception and feeble expansion might be traced to certain theological and philosophical factors. Under the former the teachings of Judaism might be summarized, while Platonism, with its complex ideal colorings, embraced the latter. Of these two fac-

tors, prime importance should be attached to the theological, since not only in its very nature it was constituted to strengthen a more tangible form of theistic faith, but it also formed an earlier basis for the evolution of the Logos conception. Whatever the occasion for the proper estimate and employment of the term, it was already at hand in the Old Testament when the apostle found it necessary to use it. The thought points to the personification of wisdom and a general characterization of the term "Word of God."

In the books of Ecclesiasticus, Proverbs, Sirach, and Wisdom, expressions are frequently employed which pointedly anticipate the nature and functions of the Logos. To quote only a few: "By the word of the Lord were the heavens made" (Ps. 33: 6). "He sent his word, and healed them" (Ps. 107: 20). To the phraseology, "Word of God," the Targum more strictly adheres. Personification, the Word of God is introduced under the similitude of wisdom. "I was set up

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from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was" (Prov. 8 : 23). "He created me from the beginning, before the world, and I shall never fail" (Ecclus. 24 : 9). In the Wisdom of Solomon this same divine manifestation is styled as the "breath of the power of God, and a pure influence flowing from the Almighty."

Thus, without greater enlargements upon its theological antecedents or further references to its philosophical anticipations, it will be readily seen that throughout the various periods and phases of Judaism, the idea not only prevailed that God's revelation is a mediate one, but that also the adequate and exhaustive scheme was laid for the full development of the "doctrine of the creative function, the enlightening office, and the eternal generation of the Logos."

Yet more than this, since, beside the miscellaneous expansion of the Logos idea, the fulness of time involved an expression of the Logos as fact. For had He continued

to exist in Himself or in the mind of Deity or man, the exigencies of the latter's condition would never have been met. Without the advent of the Eternal Logos in time to man, the bridge of revelation had never been completed.

CHAPTER III.

PRE-EXISTENCE.

Πρὶν Ἀβραὰμ γενέσθαι ἐγὼ εἰμί. — John 8: 58.

IF the prologue of John's biography of the Logos, so beautifully portrayed, is lacking in any one respect, it is the brevity of its allusion to the pre-existent state of the Son of God.

He seems to halt long enough upon the threshold of the sublime narrative merely to make secure his pathway of movements, meantime exciting in the beholder an interest in the revelation, only satisfied by subsequent though fragmentary references made to it. He tells us that "In the beginning was the Word" (John 1: 1).

At this pithy utterance there is a natural temptation to demur, but upon second thought

it will be discovered that enough is contained therein to make the most anxious wise, even unto salvation. John has winged his way sufficiently far into the hidden recesses of the past and has recorded enough to increase the faith and confirm the hope of dying men in Him who is the Life and Light of men. (John 1 : 4.) And this seems adequate to the situation, as it embraces both all that was necessary and all that was possible. It was necessary that the eternity of Christ should be an established fact, in order to meet the situation of fallen humanity, since belief in Him is the prime condition of eternal life. (John 3 : 15, 16 ; 1 John 5 : 11, 12.) As a prominent evidence of the eternity of Christ and of His consequent pre-existence as to time and humanity, we have to refer but the introductory phrase of the Johannic Gospel.

The (*Ev ἀρχῇ*) “in the beginning” here is plainly antecedent to the (*בְּרֵאשִׁית*) “in the beginning” in Genesis. With Moses, while

the eternity of Deity is taken for granted, the personality of the Son, nor yet the fact of His being, was hinted at, to say nothing of His already existent state. With these data the Christology of John begins, since they are absolutely fundamental to the establishment of his profound discoveries and predications respecting the Logos.

That the being of Christ was prior to, and entirely independent of, all temporal considerations, is clearly manifest from the revelation He gives of Himself. To Abraham the Jews accorded antecedence in time; but this claim was abolished by the stronger revelation that, "Before Abraham was, I am" (John 8: 58). To the "Father of the faithful" the Great Teacher attributed merely a temporal existence (*γενέσθαι*), while of Himself eternal being (*εἰμί*) is predicated. All humanity exists or has come into being, but Divinity always has been and will ever continue to be. It is bounded on all sides by the infinite universe of eternity.

“ There is another view of the matter which I never saw developed, but one which powerfully confirms my position. It is stated thus in the catholic creed of Christendom :— ‘ And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, begotten of His Father before all worlds, God of gods, Light of light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father, by whom all things were made.’ The distinction between ‘ created ’ and ‘ begotten ’ is not only a proper one, but is one of infinite significance. God could beget but not create the Lord Jesus Christ. He could ‘ make ’ man, and make him in the image of this God-man, but in no sense could He ‘ make ’ the Lord Jesus Christ. Adam was made out of a substance which the fiat of the Almighty produced out of nothing. But no act of will or power could produce the Person of the Mediator of the nature of God, and, indeed, ‘ very God.’

“ The Lord Christ was indeed ‘ begotten,’

not 'created,' and this infinitely distinguishes Him from all other beings, and exalts Him infinitely above all other beings, notwithstanding the fact that the Father, in the act of begetting the Son, saw fit to ally His divine nature to an order in the rank of creation lower than that of angels; hence the significance of the term so often used in the Scriptures, 'the Son of God,' 'the only begotten Son of God,' His 'only,' His 'well beloved Son.' But the common view strips these terms of deep and wondrous meaning, of all their beauty and appropriateness. The Lord Jesus, in His origin and humanity, was in no wise distinguished from any other man created out of the dust of the earth, if the common view is the true one" ("History of the Cross").

Anterior to the laying of earth's foundation or the appearance of the first speck of shapeless matter in the world of chaos, the Son of God dwelt in the mysterious folds of His own personality or shared the glory of

a hypostatic trinity. Before a single star twinkled in space, or the first atom evolved from nonentity, in the bosom of the Almighty Father rested the Eternal Logos. In the distant, dateless æons of eternity, there He sat, Lord over all, God blessed forevermore. Above all principalities and powers, higher than heaven's highest hierarchies, His was undisputed supremacy, His all power and glory. When, as yet, angels were untold, or ministrant spirits slumbered only in omniscient thought, this Ancient of Days did sit, the only begotten Son of the Father, by Divine degree,—was sovereign Lord of all that was or was to be.

Among the order of created intelligences a little higher than man, the angels rank first. Greatest of all created beings, their prime and chief duty was subjection to Christ. Eternal allegiance was due to Him as Sovereign Lord and Maker; and this because from Him their being and creation came. “For by him were all things created, that are

in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers : all things were created by him, and for him : and he is before all things " (Col. 1 : 16, 17). Nor can it be conceived but that to Him the most willing ascription of universal majesty has ever been accorded. Him the angels praised and glorified ; Him they adored in the highest. For countless ages, supreme homage was yielded Him as the only begotten Son of the Eternal Father. Throughout the interminable plains of the upper world, harmony and felicity reigned while the sceptre of sovereignty was swayed by the Son.

His will was the supreme pleasure of the entire angelic and celestial host. No ripple was perceptible in the flow of heaven's service. No unwelcome spot or speck could be discerned in heaven's pure and spiritual atmosphere, while yet the holy Son was awed by all. How long the holy ranks of angels remained unbroken, no one can tell. It was un-

revealed to man when allegiance to high heaven's appointed King was discontinued. They might have kept their probationary state through numberless cycles, much longer than man kept his, most likely. Why they were not willing as a whole to worship the Almighty Prince throughout the eternities, can only be surmised. The entire problem covers a field of mystery inexorable by creature capacity, and will baffle all successful speculation throughout all time. Waiving, then, all conjecture as to the cause of angelic disloyalty and treason, the sequence and effect of their apostasy is accepted by every believer in a revealed reference to the case.

Nor did the rebellion and fall of angels in any wise affect the universality and omnipotency of Christ's sovereign sway. For even in the lake prepared for the devil and his angels, confession is made that "Jesus is Lord, and beside him there is no other." The devils, though in hell, were as truly subjects of Christ's governmental control and su-

premacy, as when they kept their first estate in heaven. But all the angels did not sin. It was only a fractional part of the armies of heaven that withheld allegiance from their Divine Chieftain. All the true followers of the celestial standard continued their devotion and worship of the Logos as if no disturbing element had ever entered heaven's plains, or as if the melody of celestial harmony was never checked.

“The rebellion in heaven was waged against the ‘One Mediator,’ and was put down and checked by Christ’s kingly power. And the confirmation of those who remained steadfast in their allegiance was the official act of the Great Daysman. He was the Judge who experienced the awful prerogatives of eternal justice in that supreme hour in heaven’s history, the same Judge who will sit on the throne in the day of final judgment, and on the same ground, and by virtue of the same authority vested in Him from the beginning, will pronounce the sentence of life and of

death eternal, and separate forever the righteous from the wicked. The wonderful ways of providence also on this earthly theatre during four thousand years of eventful history, were all ordered and shaped and controlled and subserved by the same Hand that hurled Satan from his seat, and exalted the angels that kept their first estate, and that ever since has been rolling on towards completion the eternal purposes of the Godhead" (Sherwood).

CHAPTER IV.

LIFE.

Εν αἰτορῷ ζωῆ. — John 1: 4.

As its Creator, the life of the world, in the most universal sense, has its source and fountain-head in the Logos. Before He put forth His creative energies in space, or brooded by His omnific spirit above the womb of nonentity, no protoplasmic motion stirred chaotic stillness, nor anything breathed that now breathes. The tiny plant hid yet its spiral head, the snow-hued lily slept within its latent couch, atomic insects sparkled not in dusty regions or danced in nature's sunbeams. No daisy turned its velvet bosom sunward, no perfumed dahlia filled the air with incense. In unknown depths leviathan gambolled and ichthyosaurus could not stir

a limb. Embryonic life slumbered in primordial cells, and all nature slept the sleep of universal death.

Step by step can we trace the progress of life in nature, as we follow the light of revelation. Against such systematic organization and development, science utters not a word of protest ; nor will it ever utter a syllable of objection to the record of inspiration, since its Author is one with the Author of revelation. It is only when science is falsely called such, or when obscured by superficial investigations, or is hampered by the manacles of creature bias and predilections ; in a word, it is only when it sees through a glass darkly, that it fails to see in every crevice and phase of nature the mighty workings of nature's God.

To confess that the Word of God is a being of order, as of sovereign potency, one has but to glance at the revelation of Moses before turning to the testimony of John. Viewed as the thought of God, the Logos is the most

glorious in majesty, when considered in the plan of the universe. The pattern for all things was either formed within Himself or conceived in the mind of Deity. But not only as the content of the Divine mind, but by the expression of Divine activity also, the Logos is most transcendently set forth in the unfoldings of the Johannic revelations. To His eternal omnipotent energy John ascribes universal creation in the dictum, "All things were made by him" (John 1 : 3). Between this utterance and the initial statement of Genesis, where Moses attributes creative acts to God, there is no conflict, since the same omniscient spirit dictated both. The Logos was not the recipient of delegated power from God, in any sense, since it would be impossible for such to be, in the first place ; and since, again, He was Himself the embodiment of divinity. (John 1 : 1.) The Almighty God and the Eternal Logos must therefore be one.

Our postulate, "In him was life," is suscep-

tible of infinite expansion and application. Though not intended to be understood with reference to natural life, yet no violence is committed to the thought involved to admit its applicability to the entire material fabric of nature, with its varied phases of animation. Nor does the idea embrace merely this. Its scope includes not only every form of being, but all shades of existence, every variety of energy, every mode of material condition. Superlatively it takes the angels, and man next, a little lower than the angels. In the Eternal Logos, the celestial intelligences, like finite mortals, live and move and have their being ; but so also the speechless and thoughtless creation.

The inhabitants of the atmosphere, the cattle upon a thousand hills, the finny millions of watery depths were all indebted to Him for creation, as well as Providence. Yet not only is Divine origin and superintendence asserted respecting the beasts that perish or falling sparrows, but even the grass of the

fields, which to-day flourishes and to-morrow is cast into the oven, owe their beauty, their verdure, their vitality to Him in whom was life.

For if it be true that the Logos is not the hypostasis of every type of creation, in what sense could the apostle declare that "all things were made by him ; and without him was not any thing made that was made" (John I : 3)? From the minutest dust particles floating in the sunbeam, to the most stupendous world revolving in space ; from insect and angelic creation, emanates and perpetuates the divine virtue of Him whom the evangelist most fittingly styles, "the Word of life" (I John I : I).

Gaze whither we may, this Word of life is most strikingly manifest in attributes in the manifold works of creation. Here it is most clearly revealed as both living and powerful. Identically such was its nature from the incipient morn of creation. Then the Almighty Logos spake, and it was done. He com-

manded, and His decrees stood immutably fast. Hear Him as He speaks to the chaotic depths of nonentity! See how the light flashes outward from their gloomy dungeons at the sound of His omnific fiat! Behold yon monarch of nature as he rides forth in his fiery chariot, darting his lurid looks on all beneath! Who bade him wake from his dungeon of slumber and stare his eye-balls through desolation vast? Who bade the dry land appear or to be clothed with grass and plants, and fields and forests to be robed in vernal glory? Who halted the mighty waters in their proud dominions, and commanded them to yield to life their inanimate multitudes? Heed not the answer which agnosticism may give nor that which scepticism may insinuate. They who are ignorant of the hand of God in nature, and they who deny the display of His creative genius in the stupendous world-system, must merge forth from the dominion of darkness and death; must become like little children, or be born from

above, before they can accept the truth as applied to the Logos that, "In him was life" and that "all things were made by him." (John 1:3, 4)

But the Logos as Life is only superficially comprehended, unless considered in the light of His spiritual significance. The infinite meaning encouched in the phrase can only be discovered by that vision which, healed by faith, is enabled to peer through this cosmic curtain and revel amid the grandeurs of the new creation. It is of those alone who have or would experience the second birth, that the Saviour directly proclaims Himself the Life. (John 14: 6.) In harmony with the same thought, the ideal revelator employs his favorite expression, and speaks of the Logos as the Word of life. (1 John 1: 1.) The ostensible meaning of the apostle's phraseology doubtless is, that aside from the Logos there is no mediation.

In a similitudinous aspect the vitalizing character of the Logos is also beautifully re-

flected. He declares Himself to be the Bread of Life. (John 6 : 35.) For spiritual sustentation and immortality, food is as indispensable to the soul as to the bodies of men. Without it the world had already perished, and would continue in its state of indigence and death. But it is a happy revelation that its salvation was secured by its appropriating life from Him who, as living Bread, came down from heaven. (John 6 : 51.) The interruptions of spiritual death are not only neutralized by the impartation of this higher life, but even physical death affords an inviting channel for its perpetual outflow. (John 8 : 51, 52.)

The wealth and grandeur of the life derived from the great Author of life consists in its endlessness. Its inception may indeed be referred to time, but its culmination is reached when eternity can be limited. Nor is its possession postponed to the hereafter. Here and now everlasting life is the boon of the believer. (John 6 : 47.) Everywhere this

sublime doctrine receives fresh confirmation from the Saviour. He taught it during the midnight interviews with Nicodemus and preached it in His noon-day discourses to the woman of Samaria. (John 3:4 ; 4:14.)

Again and again did He endeavor to force His convictions home to those who clamored for His blood, but seemingly without avail. (John 5: 24 ; 6: 40 ; 8: 51.) Because He demonstrated His life-giving power, the Jews sought to put Him to death ; but He gave them to understand that the offering of His life was not compulsory : that He had power to lay it down and to take it up. (John 11: 33 ; 10: 7, 8.)

CHAPTER V.

INCARNATION.

Καὶ ὁ λόγος σὰρξ ἐγένετο. — John 1 : 14.

WHILE the Johannic revelation reflects the Divinity, it no less certainly emphasizes the assumed humanity of our Lord Jesus Christ. Desiring to introduce the transcendent Personage in a practical manner, the glory-visioned seer at once presents the Author of life to a perishing world. Marvellous is the transition he makes from eternity to time, from heaven to earth, and from Deity to man. But lest the revelations overtax our faith, and the cords of our sympathies become severed in efforts to grasp the Infinite, he simplifies the sublime, retrenches the mystic, and, in a word, makes a long story short by presenting man to his Elder Brother. God thus

manifest in the flesh, pictorialized in human nature, and radiating in matchless speech, act, and life, became the greatest possible expression of heavenly thought, the most ample confirmation of infinite love.

The appearance of Christ in the flesh was not the first instance of Divine assumption of man on record. Greek and Roman divinities were represented with human embodiments and as exercising human functions ; nevertheless, such representations were invariably coupled with human weaknesses. Even such notorious potentates as Domitian, Caligula, and Diocletian claimed divine honors, and arrogated to themselves divine character.

But whenever men or gods attempt to impersonate the true God, such efforts not only proclaim rank sacrilege, but exhibit their suicidal character in revelations derogatory to both divine and human claims. In such cases the gods are no better than men and men are analogous to devils.

In speaking of an incarnate being, the idea

of the condescension of one of a wholly superior order is pre-supposed. So when John speaks of the Divine Logos appearing in the flesh, we shall expect of the narrative complete compatibility with all the preceding and subsequent claims characterizing it ; also, correspondence with the highest manifestations of the most refined humanity.

This remarkable account declares that the Word was made flesh. (John 1 : 14.) While the pre-existence and divinity of the Word is here conceded, it is not implied that God was changed to man, but that He became united to man. To do this He did not make Himself of no reputation so much as that He emptied or divested Himself of divine dignity, according to the idea in the original. The veritableness of our Lord's humanity radiated from His every earthly act and utterance. Though presented to human view by John at a stage of achieved manhood, He was still formed and fashioned as a man, having a human body and soul. His childhood

was analogous to that of Adam's posterity generally, save in its environments and extraordinary features. As a child, He probably wept and smiled, as cloud and sunshine marked His early life. As a child, He was subject to His parents, gladly doing their bidding, cheerfully consulting their will. As a child, He increased in favor with God and man, until, achieving Divine consciousness, He set about His Father's business. The intermediate scenes of His career are not revealed. At thirty, however, the characteristic age for the assumption of priestly functions, the curtain is drawn, and what do we see? We see the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world. (John 1 : 39.) In other words, we have in this spectacle the atonement pre-figured, personified. In transcendent beams, here streams His glory, the glory of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and of truth. (John 1 : 14.)

In the history of the functional life of the Logos, what a beautiful blending of the ordi-

nary and extraordinary, the natural and preternatural. As a man, He arrests us by His social and sociable instincts. He converses with men and takes them into His fellowship. At another moment, His social nature is expressed at the marriage festival; in His entertainment of Nicodemus; in His discourse with the woman of Samaria. (John 2 : 7 ; 3 : 1 ; 4 : 10.)

But man is sympathetic as well as social, so He not only commingles with men, but feels with and for them. And so we see in the God-man the full play of those acts of benevolence, the outcome of this feeling. He listened to the nobleman's tale of grief, and healed his son; His heart was touched with pity for the impotent man at the pool, and He restored him; the sight of the hungry multitudes moved Him, and He satisfied their needs; in the darkness, upon the turbulent waters, He quells the fears of the disciples. (John 4 : 50 ; 5 : 15 ; 6 : 11 ; 6 : 20.)

As benevolence is a higher office of sym-

pathy, we see this virtue beaming again and again from His gracious acts. Take the case of the accused adulteress submitted to Him for adjustment. The charge seems well sustained in matter, if not in manner. But He tempers judgment with mercy, and dismisses her in peace. (John 8: 14.) The expression of this heavenly trait of our Lord is strikingly attested in the presence of the bereaved family, when He groans in troubled spirits and weeps at the grave of Lazarus. (John 11: 33, 35.)

But as sympathy is much beneath its mark, and benevolence below its climax, until it glows and shines in love, so of this matchless Personage, John testifies that, "Having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end" (John 13: 1).

The incarnation of the Logos, then, is as real and indisputable as the personality of Hannibal or Shakespere. The scepticism which now questions His divine union with humanity once admitted that union only in a

specific sense. It acknowledged the divine factor then in conjunction with the human thought at the expense of the divine. Now the tendency is to emphasize and exalt the human by discountenancing the divine altogether.

Then the evidences of the supernatural were so glaring and stubborn, that even the blind by prejudice admitted them, though they found them stones of offence. Some were honest in their scepticism, as St. Thomas the doubter and St. Paul the persecutor.

To all such now, as then, the truth, when accepted, will display the glory of God revealed in Jesus Christ. If we accept Him only as man, the most perfect of men simply, only in this life may we hope in Him. Around the nucleus of this faith a new brotherhood may cluster ; but for the lack of the life of a higher faith, its works will die and leave us of all men most miserable. If, on the other hand, we appropriate Him as the best human expression of the Divine ; if upon the wings

of a sanctified faith we betake ourselves above the dark regions of unbelief, through the unclear atmosphere of rationalism into the lofty realm of infinite love and truth, we will both see Him who is invisible and know hereafter what is now not known.

CHAPTER VI.

WORKS OF THE LOGOS POSITED.

To substantiate the authority of a visible or invisible God to finite conception, natural evidences are ever feasible, ever admissible. Than both dogma and doctrine, they occupy a higher place in the scale of religious importance, a loftier rank in the systems of divine truth. As products of human judgment they may both err, while the voice of God in nature, like His unerring hand, is capable of no variableness nor shadow of turning from the truth. Should the atheist insist that there is no God, or the agnostic doubt that He can be known, natural evidences, with protesting tongue, will assert that God is true though every man be false. Paul was right, then, when he capitalized in the material fabric of nature, decisive arguments of the

eternal power and Godhead as against unbelief and wickedness. Nor was John wrong when, upon His mastery of the forces of nature, he discovers the manifest glory of the Son of God, and posits upon the genuineness of miracles the evangelical faith of the early Church.

Whatever else may be alleged in behalf of miracles and the propriety of their use on the part of the Founder of the Christian religion, it cannot be denied but that they were beyond satanic manipulation, and supported the mission of truth. If it be true that they alone attest the truth, it is only reasonable that we should expect their employment by Him whom revelation styles the Truth. Upon such instrumentalities Heaven has placed a patent right, and all reproductions in the name or bearing the semblance of them are lying wonders, merely intended to vindicate the cause of error in opposition to that of truth. If it be no marvel that Satan transforms himself into an angel of light,

it is not surprising at times to find him usurping the livery of heaven in which to do the service of hell. With what ingenuity does he set about, through Jannes and Jambres, to duplicate and weaken the intervention of divine power in the Mosaic ministry! But while his machinations were apparently successful with the ancient leader of Israel, so successfully foiled he was in his first engagement with the Captain of our salvation, or so thoroughly assured of His heaven-born supremacy, that he neither imitated nor tempted Him thenceforth.

Clear, then, is the gospel track for the triumphant movement of miracles when the Word of God begins His ministerial course in the flesh. In adopting miracles for the expression of momentous realities, He neither violated the laws of nature nor contradicted Himself. As its monarch, He knew infinitely more about nature than man, and simply utilized the latter's ignorance to his eternal profit.

Somewhere in Farrar's "Life of Christ," it is intimated that everywhere in nature the philosophy of the supernatural may be discovered. Instead of accounting for mysterious physical manifestations on the ground of a sovereign mediation, that writer resolves the most striking phenomena to the influence and sequence of natural operations. He also intimates that what we style supernatural is only natural, and that the mysterious are only reflections of our obscure discriminations. He further ventures the suggestion that the incomprehensibility of the so-called miraculous readily disappears at the touch of knowledge, love, and faith.

He who would master nature's secrets must first of all convince her of his love. In her friendliness he must confide, to her gentlest whispers must ever lend a sensitive ear. No earnest, truth-loving votary of nature is ever turned aside. To all such she is ever ready to unbosom her secrets or unlock her treasures. No sooner is her spirit imbibed, than

the enamoured devotee becomes elevated to a plane from which streams transcendent floods of light. From this lofty point, in looking upwards, his healed vision is bathed in the effulgent streams of wisdom, so that, in looking downwards, light also springs up from the most darksome corner of nature. It was from this eminence that Newton espied his secret of universal affinity ; here Franklin saw how the lightning could be tamed ; and Watt, how the most inimical forces in nature might be unified and made obedient to the behest of science and human will.

It is simply because man knows so much and loves nature so well that the natural elements are so beautifully blended and are affectionately responsive to his every call. The water hears him, and straightway makes obeisance. He speaks to the air, and posterity will awake from its slumber to give audience. The strong heart of the earth is touched by the wooing of his voice, and at once she unbosoms a thousand unrevealed

mysteries. With lips no longer mute, she speaks through her rocks and trees and metals ; and man, her listening disciple, soon becomes enriched with the hidden bounties of the past or present.

Among the recorded miracles of our Lord, none excites human wonder more than His raising the dead. But what is it to be dead ? If it be only a disorganization and dissolution of the ties of nature, then, given an adequate knowledge of the relations and operations of nature and competent power to reconstruct and revive its disintegrated fabric (admitting the analogy between natural and spiritual factors) and the resurrectionary claim of our Saviour, " I am the resurrection, and the life " (John 11 : 25), is at once simplified.

Never man spake like Christ nor performed the miracles that He did, chiefly because that of human nature no man possessed so varied and profound a knowledge ; because toward its laws no one ever sustained so harmonious a relation. Of humanity He must

have sounded the core, for He knew what was in man and knew all men. (John 2: 24, 25.) His diagnosis of humanity was so transcendently adequate that by way of pre-eminence He is accepted as the Great Physician. Even the fearful revelation of universal condition need not be despaired of, since He is able to save to the uttermost, and will in no wise cast out those coming to Him, though they be covered with wounds, bruises, and putrifying sores.

As a master *de facto* in the realms of thought and being, that the Son of Man should hold undisputed empire over human and demoniacal spirits might be consistently expected. To be unable to uplift the curtains of ignorance from man's eyesight, or remove the film of sin from his spiritual vision, were to degrade the office of the Almighty Logos, and construe His plenipotentiary claims as mere verbiage, intended to delude the simple or captivate the weak.

Let the sceptic, then, deny the place or pos-

sibility of a violation or suspension of nature's operation in all the life and utterances of the God-man, and we are with him. But if such be his idea of the miraculous or of what is the principle and sum of the life of Christ, we are not with him. That life, from its auspicious dawn to its mature decline, wore a benediction of light and coronation of matchless beauty and magnificence. In its varied and mysterious trend, it was clothed with the majesty of the rainbow, which overtops yet smiles on all beneath. In its simplicity it was profound ; yet in that simplicity was perfect power, and the profundity it embodied touched the root of all things. While, upon the natural side, and with reference to its human origin, the lights and shadows giving color and form to other lives, mark this also, yet these were to this as is shadow to substance, hill to mountain, or part to entirety. Zoroaster, Confucius, and Socrates charmed their respective votaries with the musical accents of their striking lives ; but as the procession of pos-

terity would come along, instead of finding impetus in the anthem of these lives, inharmonious notes and discordant sounds so mar their movements, that ever and anon they turn aside, and await the calling or seek the footprints of some safer guide. No doubt but that had these mighty religious teachers lived with Christ in the flesh, and seen His wondrous works and heard the musical cadence of His sayings and felt the magnetism of His unique life, no doubt but that they, like Peter and James and John and Paul, would have left all and followed Him.

CHAPTER VII.

LIGHT.

Ἐγὼ εἰμι τὸ φῶς τοῦ κόσμου. — John 8: 12.

PAINFULLY is it true that ever since the advent of sin in Eden, the whole world lieth in darkness until now. Of its true character and intensity there can be no finite conception. Not merely is the negation of light or predication of immoral delusion meant, when darkness is asserted as the natural state of the world, but, ostensibly, the thought refers to the moral pall cast upon the race by the invasion of sin, and the withdrawal of the reconciled countenance of Heaven from earth. Yet this was not all; for since man was unable to comprehend the light that shone even in the darkness, for him was reserved the blackness of darkness forever, had not the Dayspring from

on high visited us, and the Eternal Logos appeared as the Life and Light of the world. (John 1.) Impenetrably thick was the deadly gloom which settled in foreboding heaviness in the spiritual atmosphere, but not so that it could not be pierced by the Sun of Righteousness. The heavenly Logos was able to proclaim Himself, above every disastrous mist of sin or appalling cloud of human guilt or shadowy confines of moral death,—above the fading lights of reason or the flickering rays of philosophy,—“the light of the world” (John 8:12). The eagle-piercing eye of John enabled him, while upon the mount of vision, to determine with equal accuracy concerning the Logos, that He was “the true Light,” since He “lighteth every man that cometh into the world” (John 1:9).

Light is but another expression for knowledge or truth. It also symbolizes the highest moral excellence or spiritual perfection. As the embodiment of very truth itself (John

14: 6), Christ came into the world to impart a true knowledge of God. To all men He is the manifestation of light. Not simply is He such to those from whose eyes the "scales of darkness" are fallen, and who walk in the light as He is in the light, but even those held in the bonds of iniquity acknowledge and feel the unique perfection and excellence of the Incarnate Logos. Even the notorious Rosseau observed, "that if Jesus had not really lived, the conception of such a character as drawn in the narrative of the gospel, that narrative would itself be a miracle, a psychological problem, difficult to solve." The thought is yet more forcibly expressed and more clearly brought out by Paul Richter: "There appeared once upon earth an individual, who, by moral omnipotence only, conquered far-off ages, and founded an eternity of His own; who shone and attracted like a sun; who moved nations and centuries round the eternal and universal centre. It is the quiet Spirit whom we call

Jesus Christ. If He was, there is Providence, or He Himself is that Providence. Only gentle teaching and dying were the notes whereby this higher Orpheus tamed human beasts and turned rocks into cities. He, the purest among the mighty, the mightiest among the pure, lifted, with His pierced hands, empires out of grooves, the stream of centuries out of its bed, and is still the Lord of the ages."

Never more literally exemplified were infallible claims than the Great Teacher declared, that as long as He was in the world He was its light. (John 9:5.) Through His entire life's work and words beamed a transparent clearness. "In Him we find strength and gentleness, meekness and zeal, wisdom and simplicity, courage and patience, indomitable purpose, inflexible firmness, and the most delicate sensitiveness—all masculine and feminine excellencies perfectly blended; and that not by any effort, but as the outflow of one deep, central fountain of perfect holi-

ness and uninterrupted communion with the Father" (Saphir).

As already intimated, light is symbolic of holiness. Hence, when Christ was called the Righteous (1 John 2: 1) and the Holy One (1 John 2: 20), it was only in accord with what was acknowledged concerning Him by the world. There were some who, more wicked than certain devils even, branded Him as a deceiver; but by far the greater portion of humanity agreed that He was a good man. (John 7: 12.) And though the adverse judgment of the minority condemned Him to death, the acquittal verdict of the highest judgment was, that no fault was found in the man. (John 18: 38.) For righteousness sake was He persecuted, even to death. He not only claimed to be the Son of God (John 19: 7), but was the Son of God. Though Heaven attested the claim in audible utterance (John 12: 28, 29), yet men rejected it in unbelief. Here we have in the rankest intensity the opposition of

darkness to light, of sin to holiness. Here, through the midnight of the moral universe, flashes the lumination of eternal life, the lustre of which is prolonged sufficiently to insure a passage to the world of light. It is neither fleeting nor flickering, but its steady radiance bears down upon their deluded course. It would seem that, in the midst of such awe-inspiring revelations, even those in the jaws of death might look and live. But not so. For it is said, "The light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not" (John 1 : 5).

The doctrines and doings of Jesus will ever baffle the natural understanding of men. Did the Sun of Righteousness never shine, or did He hasten to withdraw His glorious presence from sin-enfeebled human nature? Had He not risen, or, like some impatient meteor, darted through the moral void, closing the avenues of light behind Him, then might linger in mercy's heaven some faint ray of hope on which the doomed of sin might hang their

fears. Our cosmic orb is eager to forsake the western plains at summer's height, as compared to the missionary season of heaven's visitant to earth. Joshua was no more a type of Jesus than was the sun of his faith symbolic of Him who "lighteth every man that cometh into the world" (John 1 : 9). As the Lord's people of old, under that devout chieftain, had the light of heaven delayed for a season in their behalf, even so were men permitted to enjoy the prolonged light of the truth as it is in Jesus. As the revelation of God, however, the Logos informed the world of the impermanence of His light-giving presence, and gives warning of the danger of not improving the opportunity of seeing. "Yet a little while is the light with you. Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you : for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth. While ye have light, believe in the light. I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness" (John 12 : 35, 36, 46).

Before the advent of our Lord into the world, no subject was shrouded in greater mystery or enveloped in more intense darkness than that which related to man in the unseen world. Many notes of prophecies were heard echoing along the lines of the Old Dispensation; but in reference to the old unopened volume of eschatological bearing, they gave only indistinct utterances or uncertain sounds. Seer after seer had parted clouds or rent veils that barred the sight of mortals from the great unknown. But neither telescopic sight of faith or ken of poets had removed the pall or pierced the gloom or quelled the doubts over setting this all-momentous, vitally solemn subject. Here and there, now and anon, above the religious horizon, and amid the celestial firmament, would float, with momentary transiency, some emitted ray from the luminary of eternal truth, conveying slight tokens of hope to a benighted world, or signifying scintillations ambiguous in response to the universally re-

sounding query, "If a man die shall he live again?" The burial of the great Jewish law-giver at the hand of the Almighty, the supernatural translation of Elijah, Ezekiel's vision of a revived valley of dry bones, King David's grief-occasioned solace that he could go to the death-sundered human tie that could never return unto him, indicated the certainty of death and the powerful reality of the preternatural world, while they cast no light upon its true character nor helped to draw the curtain that draped its ominous phenomena.

If these thoughts justly apply to the feeble rays of revelation before the all-luminous blaze of the Sun of Righteousness, what a world of darkness would they render the fox-fire glare of philosophy as applied to death and its contingent issues! While the religious world lingered upon the brinks of uncertainty, while they waited for some light from the upper world, the intellectual world either groped in darkness or slept in blissful igno-

rance over the mightiest problem that could concern humanity or interest the angelic sphere of thought.

In enumerating the radiating aspects of the Logos, one cannot fail to consider the original and sublime doctrines He taught and the fresh revelations of truths which He furnished the religious world. To the intellectual, moral, and religious nature of man, these truths and doctrines were forever hermetically sealed, had they not been opened by the King of Glory. Through them, Divinity shone with the transparency of a sunbeam.

To catch a glimpse of the ineffable influence of the Logos as earth's most majestic luminary, one need not confine his gaze to those streams of lustre which flowed from the glory-crowned face of Him who beamed forth from the Mount of Transfiguration, but let him look steadfastly upon the course and character signified by the "star in the east." The horoscope of his vision will then extend beyond the radius of the halo of smiles about

the babe in the manger, to the circle of brightness circumscribing the acts and sayings of "the fairest of the sons of men."

No such light ever dawned upon the spiritual consciousness of man or greeted his religious eyesight, as that which shone from the doctrine of the new birth as taught by the world's Redeemer. As the Great Teacher came from God (John 3 : 2), He soon unfettered human vision, and enabled it to take in a ray of spiritual truth respecting the celestial kingdom. Before this, regeneration as a fundamental pre-requisite to a proper conception of divine things had never been taught ; nay, had not even been known to mortals ; nay, more, such a truth seems to have been shut out from even religious guides themselves : "Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest not these things" (John 3 : 10) ? Not only was the subject shrouded in mystery or even mantled in impenetrable darkness, but it was even more than this ; for so far as a consciousness of its reality was con-

cerned, it was a mere blank or nonentity. If this be true, it is not strange or striking that its annunciation should have elicited such astonishment from Nicodemus. "Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again" (John 3 : 7).

Also upon salvation, its nature and *modus operandi*, was great light thrown by the all-illuminating Logos. In the highest sense truly did He bring life and immortality to light, when He answered by precept, as well as example, the questions of infinite merit, How and why are men saved? Salvation had ever been possible, yea, even an accomplished fact, since the achievement of its plan in the heavenly counsel; yet how it was to be appropriated by helpless and lost humanity, or what was involved in its security, no angel whispered, no priest uttered, no prophet knew.

There was, indeed, a historical revelation of salvation, but only as the Logos manifested Himself through the medium of prophecy

and law. Isaiah spoke of Christ as the Author of salvation, and saw His glory. (John 12 : 41.) The psalmist also gave utterances which found fitting application in the facts of His enthusiasm and opposition. "And his disciples remembered that it was written, The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up" (John 2 : 17). "I speak not of you all: I know whom I have chosen: but that the scripture may be fulfilled, He that eateth bread with me hath lifted up his heel against me" (John 13 : 18). Finally the Baptist appears as the last prophet and the immediate pioneer of the Logos. Though clearer in his conceptions and more definite in his prophecies concerning the true Light of the world, it was said of John, he "was sent to bear witness of that Light" (John 1 : 8). "He was a star like that which guided the wise men to Christ; a morning star; but he was not the Sun; not the Bridegroom, but a friend of the Bridegroom; not the Prince, but His harbinger."

CHAPTER VIII.

TRUTH.

Ἐγὼ εἰμι ἡ ἀλήθεια.— John 14: 6.

THE sublimity of the character and office of the Logos is imperfectly manifested, until seen in the light of the highest office of revelation, as well as in the light of the highest claim of all His earthly utterances. As elsewhere and previously observed, it is the office of speech to reveal thought. But this may be done without regard to the character of the revelation, for within its scope and activity is extended the bordering line between the domains of truth and error. And while it is the chief and highest prerogative of speech or revelation to discover the relation and distinction between the two, yet its duty may be performed and it may rest in content-

ment when it has delivered itself of the burden of its mission by making known the will, thought, or feeling of the one in whose service it is employed.

But more than this is to be affirmed of the nature and mission of the Word of God. The object of His entrance and career in the world was to impart a knowledge of the truth on the one hand — “And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free” (John 8: 32) — and to afford testimony to the truth on the other — “To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth” (John 18: 37). So lofty and infinite is the sphere of truth, so weighty its eternal responsibilities, that none dared to assume its high errand or meet its grave and varied implications other than the self-volunteered, divinely-chosen Mediator.

When heaven found it necessary to vindicate its righteousness, it was done through angelic instrumentalities. When it would

make known its laws, it deputized human agency. But when it would have truth look down from its glorious habitations or spring up from the earth, the Son of God became its ambassador and embodiment. "For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ" (John 1 : 17).

Still all this may be so, and yet men may remain as distant in conception from the truth as ere its dawn first gilded these earthly plains. To catch a glimpse of its eternal sunlight, one need not climb the towering height of intellectual vision. Genius and greatness must stand in its presence with uncovered heads; yea, even pause at its feet, in humble posture, if they even would learn what truth is. Before we are prepared to institute a search for this celestial visitant to earth, let us forsake the proud stand of the proud ruler of old. Not with haughty spirit nor with a self-satisfied air would it do to seek its person or palace. If we know the truth or feel its power, we must leave all

else with Pilate, but keep his query. Then, too, let us ask, "What is truth?" (John 18: 38) and consider some of its incidental features.

At times, the negative definition of a thing is much more convenient and feasible than the positive. It is much easier to say what a thing is not than to define what it is. Such is the case when one begins to inquire into the nature of truth. In dealing with it, instinctively will the mind begin to institute a series of comparisons from contrasts, and employ illustrations world without end, and in the main leave the matter just where it was found—involvement in obscurity. So that, after all, we must incline somewhat sympathetically toward unfortunate Pilate in his method of settling the mightiest of all questions, while we think his treatment of its value highly censurable. For while he inquired what truth was, he is to be condemned for not pausing sufficiently long for an answer.

Had his bearing been less haughty and his conduct yet more manly in the presence of the great Person of Truth, the fetters, which held him fast bound in error's slavery, might have yielded ; and he, poor, time-serving, vacillating mortal, might have been able to step forth as a son of Light.

Yet he advances one step in the direction of freedom. He makes a slight movement toward the Empire of Truth, though unconsciously, when he shows up its negative side ; or, perhaps, more charitably, when he revealed its positive character : "I find in him no fault" (John 18 : 38). If the Person of Truth is to be sought, here must the start begin. Its faultlessness implies its perfectness. Truth is as much the opposite of faultiness and error, as light is of darkness. It is perfect in its individual parts and in its entirety. Truth suffers no admixture with error, because it is inseparable from itself. Fact may resemble it, but it is infinitely higher than fact. The latter may be hopelessly dis-

jointed and so perverted that it may have only the current value of fiction : but

“ Truth crushed to earth will rise again.

The eternal years of God are hers.”

Confronting the universe of truth, and resisting the Logos on every side, was the world of stubborn facts and nurtured error. The chief design and crowning point of His earthly career was to meet, combat, and conquer these, and, having spoiled them, to make a public show of them. Of the two forces of opposition, facts were less insidious and inveterate than fiction, because no one would object to them because they were the foundation stones of all moral, social, and civil institutions. Facts were stubborn things to confront, and not easily silenced; and hence those who knew not the truth, and who opposed it through ignorance, were usually well armed with and intrenched in facts. Nevertheless, in contradistinction to these and in opposition to them, in so far as they were inadequate to promote His cause, the Logos

erects a sky-kissing platform upon which He rests not as transcendent fact, but as infinite truth.

To vanquish error, the creature of darkness, and to destroy the works of Satan, was the Logos manifested. "For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil" (1 John 3 : 8). And since this phase of His career was more conspicuous, it deserves more than a passing notice ; for, observe that conflict with error and its destruction was the paramount object of the mediatorial scheme and the sum total of our Logos business on earth ; hence the consistency of the embittered hostility against Him and the Truth He would establish in the hearts of men. The plot of that nefarious tyrant to destroy the infant Logos, was but one of an innumerable series of blows aimed at the Head of the kingdom of light by the prince of darkness.

The Logos asserts Himself to be, not only the living way to God, but the true way (John

15: 1); yea, even truth itself. "I am the way, the truth, and the life" (John 14: 6). In ignorance of this superlative fact, how lamentable is the thought that the world was dungeoned for ages. Since light may be synonymous with truth, the idea of the apostle may be better understood when applied to the Logos under the former dispensation, to whose unperceived activities he doubtlessly alluded in the expression, "The light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not" (John 1: 5). Not only to Jehovistic revelations and theophanistic manifestations everywhere prominent prior to the earthly movements of the Logos does he refer, but the persistent obliviousness of the world to the presence and power of truth personified, he summarizes in the phrase, "He was in the world and the world knew him not" (John 1: 10). How glaring is this fact in the face of our Lord's conflict with unbelief and error in all their hydra forms!

He charged the world as being under allegiance to Satan — “Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him” (John 8: 44) — and in subjection to error and sin, as accounting for its ethical obtuseness and deficiency in point of spiritual intuitiveness. But from this bondage there is hope in the promise of effectual emancipation. It is to be brought about not through the triumphant march of civilization, nor by the conquest of thought or culture. The disciples of Plato might not see it, nor obstinate subjects, nor devotees of worldly wisdom ever greet its unfolding presence, but its majestic power is to begin, and its disenthraling character become manifest, when the hinges of unbelief give way to the authoritative tread and divine entrance of the Teacher of men. Ere this knowledge is possessed, the Logos must be accepted as the Word of God, and His doctrine loved and

observed. However, continuance therein alone gives assurance of religious liberty
“And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free ” (John 8 : 32).

CHAPTER IX.

LOVE.

Καθως ἡγάπησέν με ὁ πατήρ, καὶ γὼ ὑμῶς ἡγάπησα. — John 15 : 9.

CONTEMPLATED in any light whatever, the subject of divine love is one fraught with ever increasing interest and wonder. Nor is its significance and intrinsic value ever to be comprehended by finite capacities. Yet, not only does it present to all human intelligence “a problem that passeth understanding,” but its solution or investigation challenges even supernatural wisdom, and may be ranked chiefly among the things “angels desire to look into.”

This is none the less true in whatsoever aspect or bearing the theme may be conned. Take it in its barest abstraction, and consider the love of Deity *per se*. Upon its re-

motest border the philosopher must ever linger, while upon its infinite thought-sea the child of fancy may only make superficial plunges or flights. Without the pales of revelation, the problem of God's love is surrounded by the boundless fields of speculation. Outside of what is revealed, no one can tell what it is or naught else concerning it ; for, not to begin with what is uttered through inspiration respecting it, what could be the starting point of finite judgment about it, or in what manner would it proceed, or where would be its egress, having already started ? If upon the fact in nature the reality of the divine love should be postulated, could anything be ascertained definitely of its character, application, or scope ? Suppose from the babbling brooks, the singing birds, the refreshing atmosphere, and invigorating sunlight, should be proclaimed the truth that "God is love;" suppose the same sublime sentiment should find expression in the fragrance of the flowers, in the beautiful tints of the rainbow, in

the appetizing bounties of the fields and forest, in the touch of friendship, and in mellifluous strains of music ; suppose these same evangels should wing the air, and reverberate throughout the universe that " God is love," would not another and higher interpreter be needed to give meaning and adequacy to the truth? That interpreter could be found in man only in part. Not in man in his activity so much as in man in his passivity. He alone of all mundane intelligences can read the sentiment of divine love in its self-human reflection. But as an exponent of this truth, in a still higher sense man is much inferior to the angels, since the latter are so much more exalted both in scale of being and intellectual endowment. Than man they know vastly more of their Divine Creator, occupying so approximate a relation to Him in virtue of their constitution and occupation.

From the standpoint of their superior eminence, both of native merit and acquisition, certainly above other beings, they seem

best qualified to attest the chief expression of divine goodness. But while they may know more of this infinite attribute than man, even to their knowledge and possible attainments there is set a bound. In their untiring study of the divine nature, they are none the less absorbed in admiration and praise than lost in love and wonder.

Revelling in seas of unrippled happiness, though swallowed up in love, they know only of its source, but can neither measure its height nor fathom its depth. To comprehend its loftiness, intensity, or profundity, they must not only soar to heaven's climax, but delve to misery's lowest vortex. They must be able to sound the core of Eternal Being, must compass the borders of infinite holiness, must span the distance between justice and mercy, or bridge the gulf outstretched from law to grace, ere they can enter into the mysteries of divine love or vibrate the chords of its feeblest notes.

Not nature, then, nor man, nor yet the

angels, are sufficient factors in the solution of the stupendous problem of divine love. Deity Himself, and He alone, must express and make it clear, since God alone is truth and God alone is love.

Among the manifold implications of love, none occupy a higher place or are entitled to more marked consideration than its correlatives, union and communion. This is none the less true of finite than infinite love. To suppose the lack of union between subject and object, is to suppose not only the non-existence of love, but the contagions of dissension and hate. Between the lover and the one loved, the union must be almost undistinguishable from oneness or identity; and the communion obtaining between them must not be mere association, but vital affiliation and fellowship.

It is when we estimate the Logos in the light of these implications, that the initiatory claims of John's revelation regarding Him seem most strikingly sustained. His one-

ness and co-equality with God are pellucidly brought out in the statement that the Word was God (John 1 : 1).

In the same breath we also have the fact of the Son and Father's co-operation, one of the holy offices of love, a thought we shall amplify in the order succeeding this.

Not more allied is human speech to human personality, than the bond of unity that relates conjointly the Son of God with His Heavenly Father. In the bosom of the Father the Son has ever occupied the sovereign seat, and from the morning of eternity has reigned as "King of kings and Lord of lords." If the universal supremacy exercised by Christ were not of His own constitution, it was bestowed upon Him as the only begotten Son of God. The Father was pleased to glorify the Son, and it was no usurpation on the part of the latter to claim equality with the Father. Nevertheless, the greatness of Christ was as derived and conferred, in a sense, as it was inherent or the

result of His divine nature. To this let us see more directly. As Son of God, the Logos became heir to divine sovereignty in all things. High above all principalities, thrones, and powers, God appointed Him heir of all things. Not in the least was His sphere or glory to be compared with those of angels, He being made so much "better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they."

It was not, then, until the First Begotten was brought into the world, that all the angels were to worship Him. If the annals of eternity could be explored, it would be found that many and unbounded were the ascriptions of sovereignty to Christ before the foundations of the earth were laid. The homage and worship of angels were, beyond doubt, among the expressions of glory He enjoyed with the Father before the creation. That He was invested with supreme glory, He reminds His Father, as it were,

in that wonderful intercessory supplication made just before He was offered up on Calvary.

The full sense in which the Logos shared association with the Father can never be answered. Suffice it to say that a result of the affiliation obtained was fellowship and counsel with reference to the plans of creation and redemption. A thought in reference to each of these plans:—

In reference to creation, it is the express teaching of John that all things were made by the Logos: "All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made" (John 1:3). This must include every species of creation, every variety of existence, since without Him "was not any thing made that was made." Especially is the creation of this planet to be applied to Him, since the world was made by Him. (John 1:10.) Said Philo in his "Allegories," "The Word of God is over all the world, and is the most universal of all things

that are created." Again, in his "Questions and Solutions," the Word of God is "the first beginning of all things, the original species of the archetypal idea, the first measure of the universe." Yet vague and misty is the sublimest theory of heathen philosophy by the side of the most practical and fundamental datum of Christianity.

That the Logos is the Alpha and Omega of the system of providence as of the plan of creation, is too patent from Scripture to admit of questioning. He who is the Beginning of eternal things must be the Author and Finisher of temporal matters. As this truth is applicable to the Father, in whom we "live, and move, and have our being," it is true of the Son, "by whom all things consist." Inseparable from the believer are the links in the chain of divine providence. He is "kept by the power of God unto salvation," while "underneath are the everlasting arms."

He knoweth the frame and uniform

thoughts of His subjects, and exerciseth His providential regard toward them by numbering the very hairs of their heads and caring for them. But herein is also beautifully blended the divine co-operation of the Son and the Father, in the guidance and well-being of the believer. He has not only granted a dispensation of the Spirit, but has vouchsafed His eternal presence and grace to His confident followers.

But above all else in the divine affections and thought, was the plan of redemption. "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son." Yet succeeding the consummation of the divine will and pleasure in this vital line, both preparatory steps and stages of development were involved. A covenant between the Word and Father was therefore entered into the remote councils of eternity, the subject-matter of which was the redemption of humanity from the ban of the broken law. Only could this be effected by the terms of the inimitable covenant being

met. Its exactments, though superlatively rigid, were met in the sacrifice of the "unspeakable gift" of God.

Had the Son interposed the slightest objection, its wholesome promises would have fallen, its eternal provisions forever forestalled. But as He delighted to do the will of His Father, He readily acquiesced in the divine plan respecting man.

As the Father loved the Son and the Son the Father, what the Father loved the Son also loved. Also, while it is true that God sent His Son, it is even true that the Son freely and cheerfully came. Love was the inspiration that moved and the celestial wings that bore Him to earth. It was the golden circle in which His forces played on earth, the golden chain that still linked His life to heaven.

Thus the chief and most normal impulse of love is the sacrifice of self for its object. It seeks not its own interest or happiness, but spurns every phase of selfishness. Its min-

istry is that of benevolence and complacency. This ideal love has its abode and culminating point in the heart of Divinity alone. On the part of the Infinite it became manifest in the inestimable Logos gift. (John 3 : 16.) The value of this priceless legacy is only the more enhanced because of its conferment upon an undeserving and unappreciating world. (John 3 : 17.) All other love is but dross as compared to this. Creature love or angelic love may be imperfect, since it tends again toward self ; but “ herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins ” (1 John 4 : 10).

CHAPTER X.

TEACHER.

Οίδαμεν ὅτι ἀπὸ θεοῦ ἐλή λυθας διδάσκαλος. — John 3 : 2.

IN the light of all the learning of which the world boasted for ages, — that which beamed from Akkadian myths and lore or streamed from the mathematical systems of Egypt or gilded the dicta of Indian savants or penetrated the body of Grecian metaphysics, that found liberty in prophetic schools or remained pent up in Alexandrian academies, — yet still it was that the world at large and in particular needed a teacher from God. Neither Istarian legends nor Hindoo philosophy nor Chinese research nor Assyrian science nor Grecian poetry nor Roman theology could furnish aught of security beyond the comfortless pales of their own structures. They carried with them no

internal evidence of vital worth; they bore no credentials of supreme authority. They were either vague or misleading, else dissatisfied or unsatisfying. They bred anxieties among their devotees and cynicism among themselves. Their priests set up universal wails of discontent, and the people in lugubrious echoes answered back. Men concerned themselves very little with the problem, What is truth? but tried to solve its sensuous side, What is life and is it worth living? Its origin, all said, was agnosticism; its aim, knowledge and happiness; its philosophic teachings, the avoidance of misery; its inevitable, disappointment.

Upon the threshold of the Christian era, just before the Great Teacher appeared, the essence of all true wisdom, it was taught, was to regard life with supreme indifference. Empedocles and Heraclitus, Plato and Hegesias, all regarded death as the chief benefactor of humanity.

Thus the darkness and degeneracy which

enveloped and pervaded the world with regard to its creed and character prior to the appearance of the Logos, can at once be seen. Therefore its need of a Teacher wiser and greater than Moses, or more authoritative and perfect than Socrates, must be readily perceived in the universal condition referred to. The most lamentable feature of this wide-spread and appalling cloud of ignorance is again perceptible, in that it obscured the spiritual sense or curtained the intellect or begloomed the moral consciousness of priest as well as credulous followers. In the main and in a word, the entire situation may be reduced to this : The blind were leading the sightless. They stood alike upon the brink of destruction, when the word and works of the Guide from heaven called back their ill-starred footsteps. Surely He who was able to proclaim Himself the Way, the Truth, and the Life, was worthy of universal confidence as the infallible Teacher of a world of mortals.

The authority of the Logos as a divinely delegated teacher, rested not upon human discovery of that fact, nor upon human confession and testimony to the same. Though a thousand Nicodemuses had affirmed or denied His official rank as the heavenly legatied Teacher, it would not have weakened nor strengthened the fact in the least. Had the acknowledgment of Nicodemus — “We know that thou art a teacher come from God” (John 3 : 2) — met with universal endorsement, it would have been summarily dismissed by the Great Teacher as inadequate and immaterial. Alike valueless were the witnesses of Nicodemus and John, of Thomas and Bartimæus, of sceptical Pharisee or credulous devotee, as he received not the testimony of man. “I receive not testimony from man” (John 5 : 34). Independent of and infinitely above every human agency, there were incontestable claims of the incarnate Logos.

Regarded objectively, these may be found underlying and crowning all the acts and

achievements of the Word of God. To these He Himself attached an importance overshadowing all others, and to these He could boldly appeal in proof of His divine mission and omnipotent character. "But I have greater witness than that of John : for the works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me. And the Father himself, which hath sent me, hath borne witness of me" (John 5 : 36, 37).

By no means, however, is it understood that human testimony or discipleship was in any sense discarded by the Divine Teacher, for He Himself recognized its place and foretold its appointment. "And ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning" (John 15 : 27). The infallible test the world was to apply to the messengers of truth, — "By their fruits ye shall know them," — Incarnate Truth would have applied to Himself.

Since, then, by their fruits the former were

to be known, even so was the latter to be proclaimed to the world by the tongue of good works. It was through these that He would have His claim to infallibility discovered and His right to the confidence of men recognized. Hence He could stoutly challenge the blind and obstinate Jews, and say, "If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not. But if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works: that ye may know, and believe, that the Father is in me, and I in him" (John 10: 37, 38).

The rejection of Christ as the heaven-sent Teacher of men, in the face of His stupendous and overwhelming work-evidences, is made the proof of human guilt and the occasion of human condemnation. It scarcely seems possible that the many mighty works He did only won for their Author, in the estimation of man, the opprobrious title of an impostor. Is the human heart so deceitful and vile as to suppose that the divine resources could be so easily commanded by

one whose sinister errand was to deceive humanity? Had Christ mocked the anguish of men, had he scorned the appeal of the weeping sisters, had he taken food from the needy or sight from the seeing, had he done evil instead of good, or embassied the cause of darkness instead of the kingdom of light, those who spurned His teachings or sought His life might have been credited with some consistency at least. But since never man spake like Him; since never was guile found in His mouth; since grace was ever found in His lips; since the dews of kindness were distilled from His every utterance; since the honey of love flowed from His every act; since He was the anointed of heaven, in whom the Father was well pleased, surely sin reached its most daring climax, and infernal wickedness its most blazen depths, when they impugned His holy motives and piled infamy on His sovereign claims. No wonder that, as He was about to place His cause in His Father's hands, and lay down His life for

the world, wiping the blood of His enemies from His holy garb, He could kindly say, "If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin" (John 15 : 24).

CHAPTER XI.

THE GLORIFIED LOGOS.

Καὶ δεδόξασμαι ἐν αὐτοῖς οἷς. — John 17 : 10.

OF unpardonable shortcoming must the account of the Divine Word be judged, which from a religious standpoint does not unreservedly surrender to His claim as the Lord of glory. Concession to this truth is the pillar and capstone of all trustworthy revelation, the Aleph and Tau of all adequate salvation. As a golden thread, this sublime admission should penetrate every sacred account of the Son of God ; as a crowning point it should adorn our views regarding Him. The initiatory accordance of John, that men attested this glory and the self-testimony of the sacred Hero also, but too truly substantiates the narrative. He refers to some dateless era of eternity when He en-

joyed this glory in union with the Father. (John 17 : 5.) The most exalted sphere of celestial felicity and happiness was enjoyed by Him ere He commenced His career in the flesh.

But we here find ourselves upon the threshold of one of the most stupendous problems in the divine volume, and there we must content ourselves. And yet, because the Lord did become as a servant, and the acknowledged sovereign as a menial subject, we should mingle our wonder with praise, since He disrobed Himself of ineffable glory, despising the shame and humiliation, and freely kissing the rod of the divine vengeance in order to secure our deliverance from death. By acceptance of and loyalty to His mandates, we should replace the diadem of infinite splendor upon Him, and again crown Him Lord of all.

During the darkness of His earthly pilgrimage, while, as it were, treading the winepress alone, it is refreshing to contemplate

the beams of glory that often brightened the pathway and gilded the sorrows of our Lord. The evidence of His being the only begotten and divinely-endorsed Son of Heaven, no doubt sent shafts of light through the midnight of His solitariness, and aided His passage across the steep and rugged ways of His earthly toils. Of the thick clouds that gathered about the "Man of Sorrows," most melancholy nature is not faintly suggestive, nor can human sympathy, by sheer force of feeling, estimate — clouds occasioned from a keen sense of man's spiritual need and his ignorance thereof; clouds from the hostile elements of a sinful world in which He was a stranger; clouds arising from the gulf of misery below, into which He must plunge in order to rescue man; clouds of divine vengeance from above, which must eclipse His life ere He effect the sinners' atonement. Amid such excruciating realities, might we expect other than the divine confession, "Now is my soul troubled" (John 12: 27)?

Nevertheless, this dire humiliation of Christ cannot be contemplated aside from the glory it involved. As in the deep shadows of evening clusters of brilliant tints combine, so in the darkening shades of the divine earthly life, celestial halos always dispelled the gloom. From vale to highland, in humiliation and then in glory, we characterize our Lord's tabernacling among men. Depressions and elevations are the threads and texture which interwove the incarnate life; its darkest gloom bore its related sunshine, its deepest struggles issued in signal triumphs. His was not the case of the chieftain who awaits victorious returns from the field of engagement to be covered with honor, but that of the hero of successive struggles, who wears his glory alike contending with the foe as while enjoying the shouts of admirers. This glory, although veiled, was as real in Gethsemane as at the Jordan at His baptism; on Calvary when crucified, as on the mount when transfigured. The wise men discerned

it in the star that heralded His advent. Angelic notes attuned it to a sleeping world and to waiting shepherds. Costly treasures at His cradle and enriching fragrance at His tomb, most eloquently attested the genuineness of the glory due the Prince of Peace and Saviour of men. In being able to complete His life's work, in the openly given divine acknowledgments to His sonship, in His resurrection from the dead and reception into heaven, we have the highest earthly expressions of the Lord of glory.

But what was all this compared with the glory that was revealed thereafter, or by the side of the supernatural honors He enjoyed with the Father ere the morning stars sang together or the sons of God shouted for joy? Then angels worshipped: now saints unite in adorations. Then the incense of heavenly harps was scattered: now victorious palms are flourished. Then the chorus was "Old Hundred": now they sing a "new song." Then the heavens declared the

glory of God : now heaven and nature echo the "song of Moses and the Lamb." Its apocalyptic refrain, floating from heaven to earth, caught the spiritualized ear of Him who, though really elevated to the highest peak of divine love on earth, apparently is deserted upon the precipice of human extremity. But since the extremity of mortals is often the divine opportunity, the darkness of His human trial is only a medium through which the beloved John experiences more of the grandeur of infinite love. The sublimest splendors of heaven are presented to his glorified vision, but their central figure is the victorious Word. Coronated throngs, brilliant multitudes, dazzling thrones, stupendous celestial grandeurs attract his beatific eye in panoramic succession, but his spiritual gaze is ever steadied upon the "Altogether Lovely." Whatever else of glorious rapture stirred his soul, naught else excited his ecstasy so much as the universal homage yielded Him who sat upon the throne. Blessing and glory and

wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might are the salient features of the spontaneous worship ascribed by the unisoned tongues of heaven.

“The purely spiritual glory of God in heaven is, no doubt, that which excelleth; it more immediately radiates from Him as a spirit, and belongs to His nature and image. Its perfect manifestation is the unveiled vision of His face, and must afford the highest bliss to the spiritual nature of creatures in the highest state of advancement. It satisfies its longings, it bows reverently before the vastness which is set before it; it asks no more. It would be the height of rashness, if not sacrilegious, to attempt to describe the glory. It has not and cannot enter into the heart of man to conceive of it. And there are words which are unspeakable, and things which are unhearable and unbearable, even as there are things which are inconceivable by men. Ah! how can we, who are of the earth, comprehend the pure,

spiritual glory of the Godhead? God has proclaimed His name in His Word, and in His works demonstrated the glorious attributes of His character; but still, how little we know of Him! How feeble and imperfect are our conceptions, not only of His character as a whole, but of any one of its individual attributes! How vain, then, to attempt to describe, or even to comprehend, that spiritual glory, which will forever attract and fill the most enlarged contemplative power of an immortal spirit! All that we can say is, that the perfections of the divine character will be unveiled to the contemplation of the redeemed. They shall see Him as He is; they shall know even as also they are known." "Conceive one glory resulting from substantial wisdom, goodness, power, truth, justice, holiness; that is, beaming forth from Him who is all these by His very essence, necessarily, originally, infinitely, eternally, with whatsoever else is truly a perfection. This is the glory blessed souls shall behold

forever.” “They shall see the beauty of His person; the splendor and brightness of His understanding; the largeness of His love; His uncorrupted justice; His unexhausted goodness; His immovable truth; His uncontrollable power; His vast dominions, which yet He fills with His presence, and administers their affairs with ease, and is magnified and praised in them by the throng of all His creatures.”

But may not the Divine Being, by some sensible glory not belonging to His essence, and which it would be too much for man, while in the flesh, to behold, manifest Himself to the redeemed in heaven? To see what angels and the glorified in heaven look upon with steady gaze and joyful exultation, would rend the veil of the flesh and cause our present tabernacles to break in pieces. Is it wholly inconceivable that the Most High should grant to them some adumbration of Himself? some symbol as the sign of His presence? John, however, maintains that

there may be in heaven some such “umbrage,” or “shadowy representations,” as an object to the proper sensitive powers and organs of the resurrection body. Archbishop Tillotson, on the other hand, thinks that the expression, “seeing God,” is to be taken strictly in a spiritual sense. “We are not to dream that we are to see God,” he says, “with our bodily eyes ; for being a pure spirit, He cannot be the object of any corporeal sense ; but we shall have such a sight of Him as a pure spirit is capable of, — we shall see Him with the eyes of our minds and understandings. And in this sense we do, in some degree, see God in this life by faith and knowledge, but it is but darkly. When we come to heaven, our understandings shall be raised and cleared to such a degree of strength and perfection that we shall know God after a more perfect manner than we are capable of in this state of mortality. And this perfect knowledge of Him, together with the happy effects of it ; those affections which it

shall raise in us, and that blessed enjoyment of the chief good which we are not able to express, is that which is called the sight of God."

But whatever may be true as to the figurative or literal sense of the beatific vision, as commonly understood, the subject seems to be relieved of all difficulty when we consider that the Shekinah, or visible symbol of the Divine presence, will be seen in the glorified humanity of our Lord Jesus Christ. God was "manifest in the flesh" by that material body of Christ, which men saw with their eyes and which their hands handled; which they had no power to destroy without His permission; through which His disciples saw the rays of His divinity stream forth, changing the fashion of His countenance until it shone above the brightness of the sun, and imparting to His garments a lustrous whiteness as "no fuller on earth could whiten them"; which was suspended on the cross; which the tomb could not confine; and was seen and handled by them after His resurrection.

This very body they saw go up into heaven ; and there glorified, it still manifests God—manifests Him as He could not be manifested to mortal eyes. The Deity took our nature that He might suffer therein, and might converse with finite creatures on earth. He therefore took a body which did not seem to differ from their bodies. He still wears our nature in heaven, that creatures who are still finite, and who could not sustain the dread presence of God and live, may enjoy communion with Him there : but oh, how glorious ! The transfiguration glories may have been, in part, designed to give us some conception of His body of glory. His people, too, shall be around Him, with their vile bodies fashioned like unto His glorious body. And this humanity, shared alike by the Redeemer and the redeemed, this communion, this vision of God manifest in the mediatorial King, will be eternal. The tabernacle of God will be with men forever, in the sense that the glorified humanity of our Lord will be the

tent or tabernacle in which the glory of His divinity will reside, and through which its splendor will shine forth, with a brightness which shall fill all heaven with unspeakable joy.

The saints in heaven will behold the once crucified but now exalted and reigning Saviour, every one exclaiming, "He loved me and gave Himself for me! 'Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation!'" Christ will not lay aside His glorified humanity where He lays aside His mediatorial kingdom. He will never cease to reign : He will only cease to mediate for the redeemed, made perfect and confirmed in holiness forever, beyond the peradventure of a fall. But His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and to His dominion there shall be no end. As the Father did not cease to reign when He delivered the mediatorial kingdom to the Son, so the Son will not cease to reign when He delivers back the mediatorial king-

dom to the Father. He will stand at the head of His redeemed Church, and in His glorified body be the great object of homage to the members of that Church. He will smile on them, He will welcome them, He will love them; and every perfection and every excellence that can be named in all the beauty of holiness, will shine forth from Him and attract every eye. They will know that they are looking upon Him, who atoned for their sins from His death on Calvary, who interceded for them in the presence of the Father, who gave them His spirit to renew and sanctify their hearts, who succored them in temptation, who supported them in death, and crowned them with eternal glory; and as they behold His complacent and gracious smiles, their souls will be filled with rapturous delight.

CHAPTER XII.

THE INDWELLING LOGOS.

ὁ μένων ἐν ἐμοὶ Κάγω ἐν αὐτῷ — John 15: 5.

THE perpetual manifestation of Christ in the flesh is symbolized in the simile of vine and branches, and most strikingly exemplified by the living members of His Church. Paul could no more strongly point to the apostolic ministry as his epistles, known and read of men, than can faithful believers in all Christendom be pointed as reproductions of Christ in humanity. As Christ is not only the Word, but the Ever-living Word, so man, too, possessing the divine life, cannot live by the Word alone, but must abide in the Word. He does not simply sustain a relation of a remote kind to the High Priest above, but an intimate union of a vital char-

acter to the life-sustaining Word that is near. Let the spiritual mind discover the vitality actuating between a vine and its branches, between the body and its members, and quite readily will it discover the place the believer occupies as a branch in the vine of Christ, as a member in His mystic body.

It will then be seen that the relation is not figurative, but literal; not metaphorical, but real; not temporal, but eternal. If the literal Word conveys to us the Spirit, the spiritual Logos communicates to us the divine life. The injunction to abide in Christ indicates the necessity of divine communion in order to Christian life and its fruitfulness; apart from the vine, the branch cannot exist, much less evince its fruit-bearing nature. So man cannot do without God, nor the child of God without his Saviour. "The sap flows from the vine to branch and tendril and leaf and fruit. The branch of itself is a lifeless organ, and only fulfils its function when it is connected

with the vine. Thus, in the spiritual life, men apart from Christ have no original source of life and fruitfulness. The true life flows from Christ to every branch that abides in Him, quickening, by its power, the whole man, and making him fruitful in good." Verily did the apostle attest and amplify this truth to the subjects of his epistle when he affirmed, "If these things be in you, and abound ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful."

The fructifying character of true discipleship is not only indicated in the Johannic writings, but most strikingly illustrated in the life of those figuring faithfully in the drama of Christian endeavors. Take the chief among the apostles, and that one than whom the least in the kingdom of heaven was greater. The giant faith and Herculean works of both are posited as much upon the sense of personal inadequacy. Paul confessed his unworthiness of an exalted place upon the roll of discipleship, yet, though weak, felt strong and able to do all things through

Christ his source of strength. The Baptist, less and greater than a disciple, divine har-binger though he was, acknowledged publicly his decreasing importance, while he declared the increasing power and eclipsing magnifi-cence of his Master.

So, too, with the evangelist, whose transcendent gospel and revelation we have been considering. Throughout his general career, not only does he betray a loving dependence upon his loving Master, but, amid the stupendous rewards of grace and fidelity, shrinks into a self-abasement from which divine interposition alone could rescue him. Deserted by man and exiled from the truth, when God appears to rescue him, he falls as one smitten with judgment. Yet the strength of the vital bond linking the believer to Christ, and the activity of grace, with its ever precious results, are ever perceptible in the life of him whom Jesus loved. After he is revived from the swoon of grace, delivered from the adverse powers, and enabled to renew his testimony

to the truth, the evangelist, wearing himself out in the services of righteousness, still attested the triumph of divine truth by bringing forth fruit in his old age. Even when cruel time arrested his footsteps, and its iron hand enfeebled his speech and hampered his movements, near the door of God's temple he would often lean, and from his quivering lips, let fall the holy accents, "Little children, love one another."

Finally, it being seen that what is true in reference to the unity of the Father and Son is also true as regards Christ and the believer, it is reasonable to infer some indisputable evidence of an existing bond between the latter. This evidence is obedience; which, though subjective and spiritual, presents its practical and objective side in the believer's life. "If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love" (John 15: 10). In the absence of such evidence, the divine indwelling has no favorable test, since such test alone can be

instanced in the obedience of the believer, which culminates into the higher state of adhesion. In his life of fidelity and obedience he is not to be left alone, since he has in the instance of his Lord and Master abundant encouragement. Of this organic union the Holy Spirit is the perpetual life. (John 14 : 6.) "As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world" (John 17 : 18). , And he shall glorify Christ. (John 16 : 14).

